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The following presents were announced to have been received, and thanks were given to the donors:—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

- From the ACADEMY.—Trans., Royal Academy of Science, Denmark.
From the EDITOR.—Medical Press and Circular.
From the AUTHOR.—Rev. F. Fothergill Cooke, Authorship of the practical Electric Telegraph.
From the SOCIETY.—Proceedings of the Royal Society, xvi, 98.
ANON.—Social-Juristische Studien, 5th Part.
From the SOCIETY.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Part i, No. 2, 1867.
From the SOCIETY.—Royal Society of Sciences of Saxony, Der Methode d. Klemsten Quadrate. Berichte d. Math. Phys. Classe 1866-67.
From the EDITOR.—Proceedings American Anthropol. Soc., 1867.

FOR THE MUSEUM.

From Dr. CANTON.—Skull of a Negro.

MR. DENDY exhibited an egg-cup which he had extracted from the ileum of a man after death, as illustrative of the great endurance of human organisation.

The Rev. J. D. WOOD exhibited two specimens of Indian manufacture which he considered very remarkable. One of them was an ornament made from the gum jade of China, so extremely hard that it only be cut by its own dust, and in the centre of it there was a disc which had been cut out of the stone, so that it could rotate in its own groove; it was taken out of the private apartment of the Queen of Oude, but what it was meant for he could not say; it might be an amulet. The other article was a dress, with legs and arms, made in one piece, but so small that it was difficult to conceive how any person could have gone into it.

MR. HARRIS and Capt. BABINGTON stated that it was a kind of dress not uncommon on the west coast of Africa, and that such dresses were worn by men as well as by girls and boys.

A jaw-bone, found in a Roman sewer in the city of London, was contributed by Mr. LYLE.

A communication from Mr. HENRY SMYTHIES, of New Zealand, was read.

A paper on the Hovas of Madagascar, by Lieut. OLIVER, was then read.

The island is situated at a distance of four hundred miles from the coast of Africa, and would appear never to have been connected with that continent. It is peopled by races as peculiar in their way as any races can be, and offering very marked pre-eminence over the Negro. They may be termed Oceanic rather than African. The general name of Malagasy has been given to the tribes, but to themselves they are known only by their tribal names. There are no traces in Madagascar of a primæval civilisation; but the Malagasy have considerably taught

themselves. They have domesticated oxen and pigs, and made some progress in the cultivation of rice, yams, etc. Their religion is but recent, having been invented by the upper classes to control the lower. They are, however, receptive of superstition. Their language possesses a well-constructed grammar, but without written forms. There would seem to be two special types of man in the island; one marked by small stature and a comparatively fair complexion (comprising the Hovas, the Betanimena, and two other tribes); the other remarkable for a larger structure and deep brown or even black skins. These latter form the aboriginal population. Although black, these are evidently not Negroes proper, and even the dress of the Malagasy shows that they have derived none of their ideas from the continent. The population of the island is roughly stated at 5,300,000.

The physiognomy of the Hovas is Mongol, with affinities to the Malays. They form, although the least numerous, the governing race, and take the command of the army and administer the state. Though small of stature they are well-proportioned and graceful in carriage, but they are not capable of great physical endurance. Their heads are well-shaped, with high foreheads, marked intellectual capacity, small, often aquiline nose. The hair of late years has been cut short; the women wear their hair elaborately dressed. Grey hair is carefully pulled out. The complexion is olive. They are not natives of the central province of Ankova, though they occupy it; their original seat is unknown. Next to them in intelligence rank the Betsimasaraka and Betamina; they are supposed to have arisen from the intermixture of the aboriginals of the east coast and the remnants of an Arab colony. The second division of the Malagasy population consists of the black races; they are taller, and very athletic. The Hovas for many years paid tribute to the Sakalavas, until Radama I. invaded their territory and married their chief's daughter. They still carry on a slave trade from the east coast of Africa, at the rate of four head of cattle for one slave. Although the Hova claim the sovereignty of Madagascar, and have made treaties with the English as to the slave trade, they are powerless to prevent the Sakalavas from carrying it on, as they have only one station in the country of the latter. Lieutenant Oliver proceeded to enlarge upon many of the other tribes, and then spoke of the existence of caste, of polygamy, and of the peculiar custom of forcing the crews of vessels to pass one night with females of the island before supplying the vessels with water, provisions, etc. He also enumerated their punishments and penalties, and spoke generally of their singular habits and customs.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT, the thanks of the meeting were unanimously given to Lieut. Oliver for the paper.

Lieut. EARDLEY WILMOT bore evidence to the truth of all the statements in the paper, in which everything was stated rather under the fact than exaggerated. The Hovas, he believed, were of Malay origin, and they were different from the people of the surrounding tribes. They bore no resemblance in features to African Negroes.

Dr. KING stated some particulars relative to the ambassadors sent

to this country from Madagascar, whom he had the opportunity of observing, and of ascertaining from them individually what was the character of the people. He believed those ambassadors to have been decidedly of mongrel kinds, and that out of the six there was only one who had an approximation to the African type. He could not trace their language to any source, nor tell where they came from. The average appearance of menstruation is at fifteen years of age, and they never produced offspring under that age.

Dr. EVELEIGH said the paper conveyed much new matter of an important character. Mr. Jones had made different statements to him, which confirmed the descriptions given by Lieutenant Oliver. With regard to the period of menstruation, alluded to by Dr. King, he said he had been practising out of England for twenty-two years, and he had known girls menstruate at eight, nine, and ten years of age, and he had alluded to the confinement of a girl of thirteen. With regard to the probability of Madagascar having been at one time connected with Africa, he observed that copal gum grows all along the south west coast of the island, and as the same product occurs on the opposite coast of Africa, that fact seems to indicate a connection with the continent in former times. Lichen and other vegetable products on the opposite coasts seemed also to correspond. The language of the Gallas and others of the African tribes seemed to be similar to that of the Hovas, as was remarkable in a peculiar *click* in the pronunciation of certain words. As regards the natural productions of the country, he believed the natives cultivated many things extensively. The rice they produced was very good, and boiled peculiarly soft and white, being in that respect quite unlike Patna rice. Copal gum might be collected in Madagascar to almost any extent. With respect to the eighteen thousand Christians said to be among the Hovas, he observed that Mr. Jones estimated them, when he left the island, at one thousand, but said that Radahunia was anxious to introduce Christianity, because, from the excellence of its moral doctrines, it was calculated to do good. As to the Madagascans themselves, whenever he had examined them as a race, he had great difficulty in finding out their origin. The Bachati tribe were particularly mentioned, who seemed, from the accounts of them, to be analogous to the Bushmen of South Africa. Their stature was generally very short, not exceeding, in some instances, four feet. Their knowledge of the arts extended to the working in gold and silver, and they make straw baskets fitting inside one another to the number of twelve, similar to those made by the Hindoos; and their manufactures seemed more likely to have been introduced from India than from any other country. The slave trade, which was practised to a great extent, was probably introduced from Africa.

Dr. SEEMANN thought there was some contradiction in that part of the paper which referred to the remnants of ancient civilisation among the Hovas, and on the comparison of them with the former occupants of Nicaragua, for the latter exhibited a high degree of civilisation. With regard to the origin of the Hovas, it appeared to him that they were a Malay tribe, though in that opinion he knew he was opposed

to Mr. Crawfurd. There was an identity in the name of the cocoa-nut, a palm endemic to America. With respect to the supposed nation of dwarfs, he thought they might be similar to the Andaman islanders, who were of the Papuan race. There were many resemblances between the Hovas and the Polynesians, among which he instanced the practice of taboo.

Mr. DENDY said he considered Lieutenant Oliver's paper one of the most illustrative of any he had heard in that Society. He would, however, confine his remarks on it chiefly to that portion which referred to nomenclature. The difference and confusion of terms frequently used in speaking of different races tended much to retard the progress of science. The term Negro, for instance, was applied to several different races. Originally it was applied to every dark man who came from Africa. He presented two sketches of crania from the Mozambique, marked in a museum catalogue in London as Negroes, which he said were most unlike the skull of a genuine African Negro, a specimen of which he exhibited, which he believed was the finest African skull in England. There was no similarity between it and the skulls of Hovas, which had been produced, or his sketches, which Lieutenant Oliver, in reply, pronounced to be Hovas. He thought it was very desirable that they should not apply the term African Negro to capriciously coloured races, but that the term should be confined to the Negro of South Africa.

Dr. WOOD asked Lieutenant Oliver what he meant when speaking of the civilisation of the Madagascans. Some of the Indian tribes of America were said to be civilised, but they produced nothing. Had these people of Madagascar any manufactures? The term civilisation was generally very vaguely applied, and it ought in such instances to be more defined.

Mr. BLYTH thought more importance should be attached to the consideration of the kinds of animals and plants in Madagascar as indications of the origin of the Hovas. The domestic kinds seemed to be similar to those of India and of many parts of Western Africa. As the Arabs had had intercourse with them for many years, he considered it strange that Arab influence and the Mahommedan creed were not greater and more extended.

Mr. LYLE remarked, respecting the fact of early menstruation, that he had known cases of menstruation in England at eleven and thirteen years of age.

Professor MACDONALD thought the Hova skull produced more like the skulls of mountaineers in all parts of the world than the skull of an African negro. He believed in the separate centres of creation of the different races adapted to different parts of the world, and that the coast and midland mountains had peculiar creations adapted to them. He thought the general movement of the human races had been from the east towards the west; that the different races were originally created in special centres; that the Hovas originally belonged to the mountain races of Madagascar, having no connection with the Malays or Negro races.

Mr. WALKER expressed the opinion that the Hovas were of African

origin, and that the Madagascans generally came originally from Polynesia.

Mr. MACKENZIE inquired whether Lieutenant Oliver had found among the Madagascans any of the blue-eyed females, of whom he had read, and, if so, whether he had ascertained anything respecting their origin? He also wished to know whether any of the peculiar double bellows found in Sumatra and among some other savage tribes had been seen in Madagascar. In his opinion the Hovas were not of African origin, but Malay.

The PRESIDENT said that the Hova skull produced was considered by some persons to resemble that of the east African negro, but he thought there was nothing about it to warrant that assumption. The hair was a characteristic of African races. If the Hovas were of African origin, he should expect to find that they had the crisp curly kind of hair of the African negro, but it appeared from Lieutenant Oliver's description, that the hair of the Hovas was generally of a different kind, and that only a few of them had curly hair. He thought it was very desirable that they should have specimens of their hair, in order to assist in forming an opinion of their origin. The paper was one of the most important and interesting that could be brought before any scientific body.

Lieutenant OLIVER remarked, before addressing himself to answer the numerous questions put to him, that his paper had originated from questions put to him by the President of the Ethnological Society at the late meeting of the British Association at Dundee, as to "the comparison between the red men of America and the black men of Africa as seen in Madagascar" of which he had been reminded in the last number of the *Anthropological Review*. Now he wished to shew in this paper that the Malagasy were widely distinct from the Negro or black man of Africa.

In reply to Dr. King, he did not consider that the ambassadors from Madagascar, either in 1835 or 1864, were select specimens of the true Hova type, and were possibly mongrel, but as a rule the Hovas presented the characteristics of a pure race, distinct from the darker tribes surrounding them; the question of the generation of infants by parents at such an early age, as mentioned in the paper, had, he thought, been sufficiently answered already that evening. He was much struck with the pregnant suggestion of Dr. Seemann that the dwarf race of the Vazimba might be of Papuan origin, this can only be corroborated by opening some of the tumuli and examining their remains, which hitherto, owing to the jealous superstition of the natives, has been impossible; in exterior appearance and apparent construction only, they resembled the Nicaraguan barrows, with central upright stone or pillar. With regard to the manner in which the "taboo" was carried out, a pole with a small bundle of dried grass attached to the top of it, was placed at the entrance of any enclosure or building, which the idol-keepers might wish to preserve as sacred, this was called a "*kiady*," and was quite sufficient to prohibit the entrance of the vulgar herd. It is curious that the Malagasy, if of Malay origin, should be such bad sailors, they having no sea-going

native craft, and their pirogues in use on their lakes and rivers are of the most primitive construction; in this respect they are far inferior to any known islanders throughout the world.

The skull, of which the drawing is exhibited as coming from Mijamb's bay, is evidently the skull of a Hova, many of whom were slain in the numerous affrays between them and the adjacent Sakalaras in the vicinity of their fort on the coast of Majumba Bay.

As to the state of civilisation to which they had advanced, he would remind Dr. Wood that there was always a difficulty in defining the exact state of civilisation to which any particular race had attained, indeed it is not so long since that the Russians were looked upon by us as thorough barbarians. A writer in the *Saturday Review* at the beginning of last year, took the author to task for terming the Malagasy "half-civilised,"* because the young ladies at the capital dressed in white muslin, and danced the lancers, (he might here mention that they danced not only the lancers but Sir Roger de Coverley, called by them "coverlids," entering fully into the spirit of it.) But they had advanced themselves to such a state of society that they possessed comfortable, well-built houses, farms, and a system of agriculture, they domesticated cattle, held markets, had formed a code of laws, established an army, and had their law-officers assisted by a police, they levied taxes and customs, and had been lately fully recognised by at least the English, French, and American governments.

With regard to their natural productions, from time immemorial they had cultivated rice and the sugar-cane, which are indigenous; indeed, it is stated on good authority, that rice and the sugar-cane were first imported into Virginia from Madagascar; the native cattle, under domestication, possess humps, but, curiously enough, the wild ones did not, a fact worthy of the notice of Mr. Darwin. Their sheep were fat-tailed and woolly, and made remarkably good mutton.

As to the copal gum, Dr. Meller, who accompanied the expedition as naturalist, pointed out abundance of these trees along the coast, and for several miles inland, up to a level of one thousand feet. They grew to a large size, the trunk of one measured was twenty-eight feet in circumference, with an enormous spread in proportion, and was covered with fruit: there was but little collected by the natives, and that Lieutenant Oliver believed was *dug up*!†

It was very possible that the Mandingo and other West African tribes might have similar Malay affinities to the Malagasy, and that the Bushmen might have some obscure connexion with the dwarfed Vazimba, and have a common Papuan origin. Mr. Wake had certainly pointed out some remarkable similarities. Professor Macdonald, on the other hand, would have them to believe that the Hovas, being evidently mountaineers, had a separate and special

* *The Edinburgh Review* of last October, in reviewing Ellis's works, styles the Malagasy as *half civilised*!—S. P. O.

† On referring to Dr. Meller's report to the late Sir W. Hooker, it appears that he says, "Very little gum is collected; the natives incise the bark, and fix bamboos to receive the gum."—S. P. O.

creation and origin in the highlands of Ankova, in which he thought few could agree. In answer to Mr. Mackenzie, as to whether he had observed any blue-eyed individuals in Madagascar, although Rochon states some instances, he could give a decided negative in reply; the double bellows mentioned were in use throughout the mining district south-east of Antananarivo. Finally, as to the question of their hair, before leaving the country of the Hovas several young ladies had presented him, and Mr. Eardley Wilmot also, he believed (assent from Mr. Wilmot), with some little *souvenirs* of regard, in the shape of neatly plaited locks of hair, and he hoped, at a future meeting, to exhibit these to the Society.

Several diagrams were then exhibited and explained by Lieutenant Oliver, and the meeting adjourned.

MARCH 17TH, 1868.

DR. JAMES HUNT, F.S.A., ETC., PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

THE minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Thomas R. Pinches, Esq., of 27, Oxenden Street, Haymarket, was elected a Fellow. Professor Rudolph Virchow, of Berlin, was elected an Honorary Fellow. M. Louis Leguay, of Paris, was elected a Corresponding Member.

The following presents, received since the last meeting, were announced, viz. :—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

From the SOCIETY—Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society.

From KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE, Esq., F.S.A., F.A.S.L.—Medical Gymnastics. By Moritz Schreber, Esq., M.D.

From the EDITOR—The Farmers' Journal.

From the EDITOR—Medical Circular, March 4th.

From the AUTHOR—Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names. By Thomas Inman, Esq., M.D.

From the AUTHOR—The Antiquity of Man in the South-west of England. By W. Pengelly, Esq.

From the AUTHOR—The Geology of Devonshire. By W. Pengelly, Esq.

From KENNETH R. H. MACKENZIE, Esq.—The Art of Instructing Deaf and Dumb. By John Pouncefort Arrowsmith, Esq.

From THE ESSEX INSTITUTE, Salem, Massachusetts, U.S.—The American Naturalist, vol. i.

From THE INSTITUTE—Proceedings of Essex Institute, vol. v, No. 1.

From the EDITOR—Archiv für Anthropologie, vol. iii, part 3.

From the AUTHOR—Vaccination, and its tested effects; or Health, Morality, and Population. By Dr. Charles Pearce.

From the INSTITUTE—Journal of the Royal United Service Institute, Dec. 1867.